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THE

CLERGYMAN'S PETITION

FOR A

REPEAL

OF THE

Sacramental Test:

Proposed to be subscribed by all the
pious and loyal Clergy in *England*;
who fear G O D and honour the
King.

In a LETTER to the Reverend Mr. T. G.



L O N D O N :

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T O

The Rev. Mr. T. G.

Reverend SIR,

I Take the liberty to put the inclosed paper into your hands, and through them to send it into the world, if it be so fortunate as to meet with your approbation. It contains the real sentiments of many of the clergy in reference to the repeal of the *Sacramental Test*; the present subject of conversation every where.

We are inform'd in the country, that there is a design, this session of parliament, to move for a bill to explain the *Corporation and Test Acts*; by which acts it is required, that the sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER should be received, according to the usage of the Church of *England*, as a necessary qualification for enjoying any place of honour or profit under the government. There are

many good churchmen, as well as myself, Sir, who wish them good luck in the name of the Lord; and would do all they could to promote so just and laudable a design: Nor can we forbear expressing our great concern at the warm opposition it is like to meet with from those very men; who, if the fear of God was truly before their eyes, would surely be the first movers in this righteous cause. It was a long time e're I could be brought to believe, that this glorious design would be obstructed by the vigorous opposition of the clergy; and I was never more surprized, than to hear it asserted, that the *church will not bear the repeal*: I know one of the dignitaries of our church very lately said on this subject, "that the repeal was fit and right, "and it ought to be done; but that it was in "wrong hands, the motion should come "from the church:" I am entirely of the same mind, that the clergy of *England* are the very persons, who should, FOR GOD'S SAKE, and for the honour of religion, appear *first* in this cause; and by earnestly solliciting the repeal, make the accomplishment of it in a sense their own act and deed: and I am persuaded nothing could be more easily compassed, if the attempt took its rise from this quarter.

But, Sir, when are we to expect this? Does there appear any thing like such a temper in the clergy? Have not things a quite
different

different aspect? Does not the chief opposition and clamour against the repeal spring from these very men? And are there any happy symptoms that forebode their coming to a better temper? I wish to God there were! but instead of this, I think 'tis visible in the behaviour of many of our sacred order [I am sorry to say it:] that there is something lies nearer their hearts in the *Ec-
clesiastical Establishment*; and is dearer to them, than the institutions of christianity: Or otherwise surely they would never apprehend inconvenience and danger from any thing, that may be done for the rescuing a solemn ordinance of Jesus Christ from that contempt; which has been cast upon it, by its being appointed for purposes, very unsuitable to the original design of its institution.

But tho' the clergy do not see fit to be the movers in this cause of Christ and christian liberty; yet is it not monstrously absurd that they should do any thing to discourage or oppose those, who are willing to make the attempt? Must the design miscarry, because it is in the hands of dissenters? Let the clergy show their zeal for the credit of religion, by heartily undertaking this work, and I'll venture to say, that the dissenters will be content, that they should have the honour of compassing it.

'Tis now, Sir, generally apprehended, I find, that the clergy are universally against
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the proposed repeal ; and from hence arise many of the reflections which are cast upon our order ; and which are unjustly improved, not only to the contempt of our character and office, but also to the prejudice of the christian religion, of which we are ministers : there are, to my certain knowledge, many wise and good men, hearty friends and glorious ornaments to the church, who are greatly stumbled at the opposition which is made in the name of the church to this design ; a design, which the honour of God, the credit of religion, the interest of our most gracious sovereign king *George*, the prosperity of our country, the true advantage of the church of *England* itself, and the welfare of the souls of men, do jointly call upon us, if we have a due regard to any of them, to do what we can to promote.

Be so good, Sir, either by publishing this hasty performance, or by some better production of your own, to let the world know, that all the clergy in *England* are not against a repeal of the *Sacramental Test* ; this is a mistaken notion, and a false representation ! there are a number (and I dare be bold to say a great number too) of the most pious, conscientious, and loyal clergy, who are earnestly desirous that the designed attempt should meet with success : and notwithstanding the majority may lie on the other side ; yet let it be consider'd, that to make up the
boasted

boasted majority, many must be reckon'd, who are a publick scandal to their character, by being known enemies to their God and their king, tho' they have solemnly engaged fidelity to both.—But such men surely are worthy of no regard; nor should their being of one side or the other in the debate have any influence or weight: unless their opposition to the repeal should be interpreted by all pious men, and loyal subjects, as an argument for the fitness and necessity of it: which I confess I think it ought.

I am in great hopes the noble spirit of liberty, which now appears in our nation, will conquer all the opposition of bigotry and blind zeal; and that his present Majesty, by his wise administration, will be able to settle us upon the firmest foundations of true christian liberty: and I pray God, all publick affairs may be over-ruled in so kind a manner by divine providence, as that we may every day more remarkably appear to be, that **HAPPY** people whose God is the **LORD**.

I am Yours,

EUSEBIUS REGIUS.

*The humble petition of ***
clergymen of the church of
England, and ministers
of the gospel, for a repeal
of the Sacramental Test,
&c.*

WHereas there are two acts of parliament now in force, [the one made 13th Car. II. and the other 25 Car. II.] by which the holy sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER is appointed to be receiv'd according to the usage of the church of England, as a necessary qualification for *any office, or offices, civil or military.*—And whereas the repeal of these acts is now become the common subject of discourse; and there is a design to apply to the legislature for relief in this case.—And whereas it has been confidently and industriously reported, that all the clergy in the established church are enemies to the design, and use their most obstinate endeavours to obstruct it.—And whereas such reports
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we apprehend are calculated to bring an odium upon the clergy, and thro' them to do a prejudice, not only to christianity in general, but to the church of *England* in particular, by representing her ministers as too regardless of her sacred institutions, and not enough concern'd for the purity and honour of the most solemn ordinance of our holy religion:—We therefore *** ministers of the gospel, and clergymen of the establish'd church, do most heartily concur in earnest desires that these two foremention'd acts may be repealed: And we do in the most solemn manner call upon all our reverend fathers and brethren in the church to unite their kind assistance in order to compass this glorious design; or at least not to throw any difficulties or discouragements in the way: And we do most humbly desire all true members of the church, as such, in their several ranks and stations, to countenance and promote this design to the utmost of their power. We do moreover invite all our brethren, the clergy, to join with us in this petition; which we upon mature and serious consideration do unfeignedly approve of, and consent to: this we are willing to signify to the world; *partly* to confront a malicious report, and to show, that all the clergy are not for continuing the *test*; and *partly* to bear our testimony for the repeal, and to clear our own consciences, by deli-

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vering to the world those reasons, which oblige us to wish these laws abrogated:—and they are such as these.

I. Because we are of opinion, that by these acts the sacred ordinance of the Lord's-Supper is prostituted to carnal purposes, and debased to very low and unworthy ends: therefore as MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL, and out of a real regard to our lord and master, we think ourselves obliged to wish and pray that by the repeal of these acts, this sacrament may be rescued from a gross abuse, and be applied to that use only, for which Christ appointed it.

The sacrament of the Lord's-Supper is one of the most solemn ordinances of the christian religion, designed by Christ to be celebrated as a memorial of his dying love to mankind: to make this sacred ordinance then a qualification for a civil office, must be debasing it to a very mean purpose; using it as an engine of state instead of a religious rite; and applying it to a carnal end, when in its original institution it was designed to keep alive in our souls a constant sense of obligation to Christ our redeemer, and hereby to dispose us to the practice of true religion. “Do this in remembrance of ME”, says Christ; and the inspired apostle adds, “as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he
I “come”.

"come". Sure this is a serious and solemn thing! it must needs demand our highest reverence, and ought to be performed with the most humble and affectionate temper of mind. Our inexpressible obligations to Christ should excite our warmest love, when in the sacred representation we behold a crucified Jesus, view the emblems of his costly sacrifice, and reflect upon the unparallel'd agonies he endured, when he expired on the cursed tree, in order to recover us from that ruinous condition into which the fall had sunk the human race. Surely, if men are ever serious, humble and thankful; if ever their spirits are in a pious frame, it must be upon such solemn and grand occasions.

But if the minds of men are not properly impressed by arguments of this tender nature; the apostle has suggested a consideration, which should certainly awe them into a most serious and reverent frame, whenever they draw near to this sacred solemnity; and that is, the expectation of a future judgment; "ye do shew the Lord's death TILL HE
"COME". Christ is coming again in a glorious manner, to sit in judgment upon the world; he will then strictly enquire whether the statutes and laws of his kingdom were regularly complied with, and whether his ordinances were observed with a right temper of mind, and for religious ends: Nor can any thing less be expected, but that he will

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then

then severely punish both the neglect and the abuse of his institutions.

This is the true doctrine of the church; this is what we and all the clergy have declared our unfeigned belief of; and this is what we stand engaged to preach to others, as one of the most important truths of religion; a doctrine indeed in some respects of natural religion, though much improved and illustrated by the superior light of the Gospel.

As we therefore firmly believe this doctrine of a future day of trial, when "God" will judge the world by that man whom "he hath appointed, even Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom;" and as we hope at that day to give up our accounts with joy, we think it our undoubted duty to desire the removing of the sacramental rest. Should it not be the care of every christian minister, especially of every bishop, to preserve the sacred institutions from being profaned or abused? Is it not a dishonour to the king of kings to subject the most solemn ordinance of his religion to carnal and worldly purposes? How can men in holy orders, and of sacred characters, ever be said to *fulfil their ministry*; or what account will they be able to give to their lord and master at the great day, who have been instruments of debasing gospel ordinances, and of casting the sacred provisions of the
lord's

lord's table before dogs and swine? And will not they be found in the same condemnation, who use their influence to perpetuate such an abuse? Is this our faithfulness to our master, to be the occasion of vilifying his institutions, or of obstructing any measures for recovering them from contempt? Is this our love for our blessed saviour to do what we can to perpetuate a most shameful prostitution of that sacred ordinance, which he appointed at the close of his life, and as it were with his dying breath? Is Christ thus to be treated by his friends? Shall the body and blood of Christ be thus spurn'd and trampled upon thro' our means? Who can bear the shocking thought! Will all our preaching or writing in defence of the gospel be of any effect and advantage, if it appears that we are instrumental in throwing contempt upon its most solemn appointments? Will not men in this case be forward to say, that we do not believe ourselves; that we are not in good earnest about religion; and that we mean nothing but preferment and domination? Will not great discredit hereby come to ourselves, and to religion too? Indeed it is well known that many men talk at this rate already; and the ministerial office is sinking daily into disrepute: they begin to say, there is nothing in religion; no sacredness in the ordinances of Christ; 'tis all pretence
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and trick ; 'tis all a politick contrivance to keep the world in awe.—This way of talking indeed is not fair ; it is very wrong to draw such a conclusion from the ill lives of any clergymen, or the neglect with which some of that sacred character treat the venerable institutions of the gospel : for even allowing that there is too much cause for complaint on that head, (I wish to God there were none at all !) yet the christian religion is not itself one jot the worse. Let the behaviour of its ministers and professors be what it will, christianity is still a most lovely institution, every way worthy of its great author, and admirably adapted to promote the happiness of mankind in this and the future world. Such offences in the present disorderly state of things can scarce be prevented ; it is said, they *will come* ; but *Woe to that man by whom they come*, &c. A dreadful account will such men have to give at the great day, who have treated the ordinances of Christ with neglect themselves, or have been the occasion of others doing so. Under the serious impression of this, We do in the most solemn manner adjure all our brethren by the living God, as ever they expect or desire to appear at his bar with comfort, to encourage the designed attempt for a repeal of the sacramental test, and to unite in a petition to the legislature for that purpose.

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Allow it to be added under this head, that the ordinances of the gospel are so peculiarly the rights of Christ; that to apply them to carnal uses, seems to be a bold infringement of his prerogative as King of his church. He himself said upon another occasion, "render to *Cæsar* the things which are *Cæsar's*, and to God the things which are God's. Sacred institutions are the property of God and to be render'd to him; *i. e.* to be observed in obedience to his command, in the manner which he has appointed, and for the uses and purposes which he proposed in the original settlement: nor do we see how the applying any of them to civil purposes, can be vindicated from the imputation of invading the rights of God, and rendring to *Cæsar* the things which are God's alone.

II. Because we are of opinion, that these two laws are very prejudicial to his majesty's government, and to the true interests of his royal house: We therefore having taken the oaths to the King, and being in principle and conscience most HEARTY FRIENDS to his sacred person and family, do think ourselves obliged to desire the repeal of those laws, as what we apprehend will be vastly for the advantage of the present happy establishment.

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That the continuance of these acts serves the cause of popery and the pretender our enemies know with pleasure. The King's hands are by this means tied up, that he is not able to command the service of any of those subjects, who may scruple to qualify themselves according to the direction of the *test* act. It is well known, that the design of this act was to prevent the *Duke of York's* employing papists in the administration, whenever he should come to the throne: to tie up the hands of the King, and so to restrain the royal prerogative was the direct view of the act: and in this view it ought ever to be consider'd, as depriving the King of a power (which surely should belong to the crown) of using the service of any of his good subjects, as he shall see occasion.

The repeal of this act must not be consider'd as a benefit to the dissenters, so much as restoring a fit right and power to the throne: For supposing the legislature sees fit actually to repeal the Sacramental Test, not one dissenter by this means comes into any place of power or profit. His majesty is not hereby obliged to employ any one of them: But here lies the grand advantage of the repeal, that the King may then have the assistance of any of his subjects, who can best serve him as far as he sees fit to use them. The enemies of the present happy establishment feel the force of this argument;

argument; and therefore to a man will do all they can to perpetuate these statutes. But that ever any, who declare themselves zealous friends to King GEORGE and his illustrious family, should in this affair join with the avow'd enemies of both, is most marvellous and astonishing.

Is it not weakening any government to debar it the free use of its friends? Does not the strength and security of every government chiefly depend on the number of its subjects, and their friendship? Let us then only consider what a vast number of hearty friends to the present happy establishment, are by these acts incapacitated for offices civil or military; be they otherwise ever so capable of service, and let their assistance be ever so much needed: and it will appear beyond reasonable dispute, that the continuance of these acts is a great weakening to the government, and the repeal of them therefore should be desired by all who bear a hearty regard to their King, and sincerely wish the prosperity of their country.

The way of calculating numbers in this affair is usually very wrong. We generally consider the dissenters as the only men excluded by these acts; and then we say, they are but a small handful of people, a very inconsiderable party of men, not worth regarding; and so the ill influence of these acts is look'd upon as nothing.

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But let us fairly consider, who are really affected by these laws, and it will appear that the number is exceeding large.

There are several members of the church of *England*, men of piety and strict religion, whose consciences will not allow them to take this holy sacrament as a qualification; and by this means the king loses the benefit of their services in the capacity of *Justices of peace*, &c. tho' God knows it is a most desirable thing to have such men placed in office. They are men heartily attach'd to the ecclesiastical establishment, never frequent the separate meetings of nonconformists, constantly attend in their own parish churches; but they cannot receive the LORD'S-SUPPER (appointed by Christ for the great purposes of religion) merely as a qualification for a civil or military office.—And truly it is surprizing how so many serious good men can receive the communion for this end! tho' we take not upon us to judge any man; yet as we should not dare to act thus ourselves, so neither could we ever encourage any to proceed this way; but have upon all occasions protested against the practice, as a sad prostitution of a most solemn ordinance: and many pious and excellent churchmen, with whom we have convers'd, being in the same way of thinking, have hereby been render'd incapable of acting for the present government, in that sphere, and
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with that zeal, which otherwise they gladly would have done.

But let us proceed ; by these acts are in the strongest manner excluded from the service of the government all persons who live without repentance in any grievous crimes : for according to the direction of the church, all such persons are in the most solemn manner charged and warn'd not to presume to come to that holy table, [for a reason which surely should make the heart of every such person tremble at the thoughts of the hazard he runs by receiving the sacrament] *lest the devil enter into them as he did into Judas, and fill them full of all iniquity, and bring them to destruction both of body and soul.* Observe now in what a situation the government is with respect to the services of such unhappy men : they have very considerable capacities to serve the government, and perhaps their circumstances are such as require the advantages of profitable offices to support the dignity of their birth ; they accordingly are nominated to civil or military offices ; they are disposed to accept those offices with thankfulness ; but then they find themselves cramp'd : here comes the test act and tells them, they “ must receive the “ sacrament of the LORD'S-SUPPER, according to the usage of the *church of England*, within three months after their admittance into or receiving their said authority

“thority or employment;” the not doing this subjects them to most grievous penalties.—Well, say they, we’ll e’en do it, rather than not keep our places.—But then comes the minister by order and command of the church, and tells them, that it is dangerous to presume to receive this holy ordinance unworthily; that if they know themselves to be “blasphemers of God, hinderers or slanderers of his word, adulterers, or in malice, or envy, or in any other grievous crime; they must repent of their sins, or else not come to that holy table,” lest they be eternally undone.—If therefore all such persons should pay a regard to the warnings of the church, and so refuse to serve in publick offices, what a vast number of hands indeed would the government lose?

Now add to all these, the body of the protestant dissenters, the greatest part of whom are disqualified for the service of the publick by these incapacitating acts; and I believe every true friend to his country must allow, that it is ten thousand pities that the government should be thus weakned, by being deprived of the power of using such a number of its subjects, and many of them some of the best and most hearty subjects in the Kingdom. For however we may disapprove the separation of the dissenters from the communion of the church; yet common justice will oblige us to own that they
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are as zealous friends to the present government as any in the nation ; nay it must be acknowledged, that they can say what no other body of people amongst us can say, that never ONE of their number appear'd in rebellion against the present royal family, or was ever known to be concern'd in any measures to the prejudice of the HANOVER succession.—We all remember how stedfastly they adhered to this in the last years of *Q. Anne* ; those melancholy years ! and how much they suffer'd for this reason ; when many, who profess'd themselves sons of the church, were acting a quite different part, pursuing measures to defeat the Elector of HANOVER's claims, and to betray us into the hands of a popish pretender. We who love and honour his Majesty ; and remember what insults all his friends, and especially the dissenters, met with in those sad times ; and with what a firm resolution they maintain'd an unshaken zeal for the protestant succession in the face of all dangers ; cannot but lament to think that his Majesty's hands should be tied up by these acts, so that he is not capable upon any occasion of rewarding the past zeal, or using the future services of such staunch and unmoveable friends.

In order therefore to support the character of faithful subjects to the best of Kings ; and in pursuance of our oaths to do all we
can

can to promote the ease and honour of his government, we think ourselves obliged earnestly to beg the removal of those acts, whereby his majesty is deprived of the help of a great number of his good and faithful subjects.

III. Because we apprehend that the continuance of these acts is really to the prejudice of the church of *England* herself; therefore as true sons of the church we cannot but desire the repeal of them.

However surprizing this may seem, considering the different representations which are industriously spread about; yet we think that the abrogating these acts must every way tend to the real advantage of the establish'd church.

To this end let it be consider'd—This will have a manifest tendency to reconcile dissenters to the church; they will more likely be disposed to attend, at least sometimes on publick worship, and by degrees may probably be drawn into her bosom, especially those among them, who may be thought proper persons for offices in corporations, commissions of peace, &c. The separation will infallibly be shortned by this means; and for what we know a few generations will put a final period to it. The dissenters, especially the *Presbyterians* (as we have been inform'd) are not *vehement* enemies

enemies to the church; they *can* many of them, and we hear they sometimes *do* receive the sacrament at church: their difficulty about the test-qualification is, not because they must receive the sacrament according to the usage of the church of *England*, but because they are obliged to receive that sacred ordinance, *As a qualification for an office*; and their objection would still remain, if receiving the sacrament in their own separate meetings was deemed sufficient.

Again; if applying the sacrament to the purposes of civil government be a prostitution of a most sacred ordinance, (as we have already shewn) then the continuance of these acts for the sake of the church and at the instigation of the clergy, must be very displeasing to the great God; and the church may hereby be in danger one time or other of feeling the dreadful effects of his anger. The good Lord avert all his judgments, and make the church to grow and prosper!

Further; it is a shameful dishonour and scandalous reflection upon the church, to represent her as needing these acts to support her. We cannot but with surprize hear any of the Members of the church speak of these acts as the *outworks* of our ecclesiastical establishment: or talk of an attempt to get them repealed, as no less than endeavouring to *break down the fences* of the church! Amazing scandal to the ecclesiastical constitution!

tion! Is the church to be thus wounded by her own children? Is she to be represented as founded upon oppression? Is she so weak as to need such outworks, or to be fenced in by such acts? Will not the purity of her doctrine, the exactness of her discipline, and above all the exemplary conversation and piety of her clergy; will not all these, under divine providence, be a sufficient security to her? or must she be adorned with worldly advantages in order to recommend her to the esteem and approbation of men's judgments and consciences? Do others preach or live better than her clergy? is their doctrine more evangelical and pure? their discipline more orderly and regular? that she must be possessed of all offices civil and military, in order to bring men into her communion, and keep them in her bosom?—Can there be a more cruel reflection upon any church than this! In truth, if we were of opinion that the church was really so weak, as to stand in need of such fences, and barriers, we should think it most adviseable to withdraw out of the pale of the church, and to have nothing to do with a constitution so crazy and shatter'd. Is it not most shameful, that whenever any thing is proposed for the general liberty of the subject, it should immediately be construed against the church, and she must be represented in danger? nothing can be more reflecting upon her most admirable constitution! 'Twas a shrewd reply a quaker

quaker once made to the late *Bishop Atterbury*, who was pressing him to come into the church; "no, says he, I can't; I would "willingly be of a safe church, but thine is "always in danger, and therefore I am "afraid of coming into it". And really if the church was perpetually (tottering as she is said to be) it would be the wisest way to keep out of it.—But does not every true friend of the church, see the absurdity of representing her as built upon such weak and feeble foundations!

Besides, is it not still more absurd to insinuate, as if the church could not be supported, but at the expence of the most sacred ordinance of the christian religion? If the church must have a test for its security, in the name of God let it not be such an one, as shall lay any appointment of the gospel open to contempt and scandalous abuse: no church on earth can justly plead her own security as a sufficient excuse for the prostitution of any religious ordinance; and if any church cannot be supported without such a prostitution, she will give strong grounds of suspicion, that whatever she pretends to, yet she is not the church of Christ. We are indeed confounded to think whither this notion of the test's being a *barrier* and *fence* to the church must lead us; and what an injurious reflection it is upon the ecclesiastical constitution, to be represented

as needing any such supports. How unaccountable is it that any thing like this should drop from her own children, whom she has tenderly nurs'd up and provided for! when a more unkind reproach on the church could not have been expected from the most unreasonable and malignant enemy she has.

Moreover, the removing these incapacitating acts will be of service to the church, in as much as it will extricate the most pious part of the clergy from one of the greatest difficulties they now labour under, in the discharge of their duty; namely, their being obliged to administer the holy eucharist oftentimes to those very persons, whom they are directed by the church to warn not to approach the holy table. Some of the most conscientious of the clergy have always lamented this as a grievous burden; tho' but few have had the courage to run the hazard of refusing to admit to this sacred ordinance persons that have come out of pure obedience to this act; whose lives have been notoriously profligate, and altogether repugnant to the precepts of the gospel.

Let it be added once more; that the greatest weight of this act lies on the members of the church, and not on those who dissent from it. The number of members the church boasts of is so vastly superior to all others, that many churchmen must be
suppos'd

suppos'd to be in offices, to one amongst the dissenters; and is it not monstrously hard that all these should be obliged to partake of a sacred ordinance, which has no relation to the office they are to serve, tho' they would chuse to be excus'd, or should never have presum'd so far, did not the holding the said office make it necessary? Instead of saying *the church will not bear the repeal*; surely the church ought to desire it, and all the Lay churchmen in the kingdom have grounds to look upon it as a prodigious grievance. What, cannot an honest churchman, that goes duly to his parish church, be admitted to the office of an exciseman, or be chosen into the common council, unless he receives the holy sacrament as a test? Does not his whole life declare him a churchman? Perhaps he has some scruples upon his mind about the nature or solemnity of this Holy ordinance, which forbid his approach to it; and must he therefore be incapable of serving the King, or of providing for his family in an honest way, and it may be the only way he has to do it in. Or possibly some, who pass under the name of churchmen, knowing themselves to be given to drinking, or some other vice which the gospel forbids, may be afraid of drawing near the holy table, when the minister solemnly warns them against coming; and must they then lose their pla-

ces, or put a force upon conscience, and do a religious duty with the reluctance of their minds? Is not this exceeding hard upon the members of the church? have they not just cause to complain? What connection is there between a man's receiving the sacrament and his being an exciseman? the former is a religious act for which He is accountable to God; but it does not make him one jot more capable of executing his office, nor does it give the government the least degree of greater assurance of his honesty or loyalty: This can't be insinuated; unless we suppose that all, who come to the holy table, are pious men and faithful subjects; which we wish with all our hearts could be made to appear.

If there must be a test for the security of the church, let it be to this effect: " that
 " no drunkards, whoremongers, common
 " swearers or blasphemers; none that pro-
 " phane the sabbath, and statedly absent
 " themselves from the publick worship of
 " God; none who will not give security to
 " the government of their fidelity, and
 " attachment to the interests of his majesty
 " King GEORGE and his most illustrious fa-
 " mily; none that curse God and the King;
 " shall be capable of any office civil or mi-
 " litary (we are content to go a step further
 " and add) or ecclesiastical within these king-
 " doms; and if any in such offices shall be
 I " pub-

“publicly convicted of any notorious crimes, they shall be *ipso facto* deprived and turned out of the same”.——Let something like this be the test, and no doubt the church will approve it as fully answering all valuable purposes both to herself and to the state. This would tend to make men good and loyal; or however it would give a check to the open wickedness and disloyalty, which is the shame and scandal of the present age.

It would be desirable to know, who are to be understood by the church, when we are told that she will be so offended at a repeal of these acts. If it be said, the Clergy; probably then the proposition may be true in general, that the greatest part of the clergy will not like the repeal; nor can less be expected; there has been too much cause given to fear, that the majority of them do not like the King, nor his government, nor any of his friends, nor can they ever like any scheme that will tend to strengthen his majesties interest: but is this a reason of any weight against the repeal? surely far from it; rather quite the reverse.——But if by church is meant, the good and pious and loyal part of the clergy and lay-men in the church; (and none others deserve the name of the church,) then we hope the proposition is not true [that the church won't bear the repeal] for surely the majority of these
must

must for God's sake and the King's, for religions sake, and for the honour of the church, be earnestly desirous to have these laws abrogated! if any amongst them are otherwise minded, the generality we dare say are not; or however amongst those, with whom we converse, there are few such.

IV. We apprehend that by virtue of these acts many of his majesty's good subjects are injuriously oppressed, and great hardships are hereby laid upon them; and therefore out of regard to the liberty of our fellow christians, and fellow subjects we cannot but pray the repeal of these laws.

It is not the case of dissenters alone; but some of the best of our churchmen scruple to qualify themselves according to the direction of the test act; and yet they are liable to be put into offices, which require the taking the sacrament, and may suffer very great damages, if they refuse to execute such offices, though in their consciences they cannot submit to the qualification required. Vastly hard: first to disqualify men from serving an office, and then punish them for not serving it. The case of *Sheriffs* is what we refer to. Surely it is meet according to all the notions of justice and equity, that the test-act should undergo at least such an alteration, as shall allow any one, who cannot submit to receive the sacrament as a qualification,

lification, to be discharged from any obligation to serve any office, where this qualification is required. It is to be hoped that the church will not think much of this: but if she is grown so merciless and unjust, 'tis likely gentlemen will think it high time, that some methods should be taken to bring her to a better and more reasonable mind.

V. Out of a tender and compassionate concern for the eternal welfare of those, to whom we preach, we must be humbly of opinion that these laws should be reversed. We cannot but heartily pity and mourn over many, who merely to comply with the test act come to the Lord's-table, who are men of most abominably vicious lives, and whose consciences tell them they ought not so to presume. Are not some of the vilest men in the whole nation by this means at one time or other brought to the holy table? and to have such men obliged to it by a statute of the kingdom, is surely a most horrid scandal to a christian nation. It would make ones heart ake to hear the prophane scoffs and jests which many vile wretches have been guilty of upon such sacred occasions; and the methods, which others who had some leavings of conscience have taken, in order to get through this dreadful task enjoyn'd by law, are most shocking.—Is there no compassion, no tenderness, no yernings of
bowels

bowels in the church to her perverse and wanton children, that she will vehemently insist upon their being obliged to a solemn act of religion, which at the same time she has directed her ministers to warn them against? Is this the tenderness of an indulgent mother!

If it be said the act does not oblige any to receive the sacrament, they need not accept of places: who is so weak as not to see the fallacy of this objection? The act says, they shall not have an office without being thus qualified; and their necessities tell them, that they can't subsist without the emoluments and profits of such an office. Desperate hard terms! either starve or sin; either offend God, or else you shall not serve the king; tho' you are capable of serving him, and stand in need of the advantages from hence arising.

Many more reasons might be added, as inducing us to petition for the repeal of the sacramental test; but what has been offer'd we judge sufficient to determine all who have a true regard for God and the King, in favour of it. May success attend the attempt, whenever it is made! may the blessing of almighty God rest upon all those, who encourage and support it! May the throne of our most gracious sovereign be upheld in mercy, and be establish'd by righteousness! may his enemies be clothed with shame, and the crown long flourish upon his head!

head! May King GEORGE and his royal family be continually the darlings of divine providence; and generations yet to come enjoy their civil and religious liberties under the protection of some branch of this illustrious house, even to the end of time.

We pray God, who hath the hearts of all men in his hands, to incline the whole nation to most friendly and favourable thoughts of a repeal; and may all parties amongst us be vying and contending in these points only, (a laudable emulation!) who shall most exceed in piety to God, in loyalty to the king, and in hearty affection to one another. Oh when shall it once be!

God save the KING.



1847
The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been admitted to the office of the Secretary of the Board of Education since the 1st of January 1847.

1. Mr. J. H. ...
2. Mr. J. H. ...
3. Mr. J. H. ...
4. Mr. J. H. ...
5. Mr. J. H. ...
6. Mr. J. H. ...
7. Mr. J. H. ...
8. Mr. J. H. ...
9. Mr. J. H. ...
10. Mr. J. H. ...

